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No. 48



# THE BAPTIST Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

## Reaching an invisible city

So. Baptist workers hit the streets of Dongguan

DONGGUAN, China (BP) — The taxi races down the elevated 10-lane highway. There's not much to look at on this journey. Endless rows of blank-faced factories barricaded behind six-foot metal fences line both sides of the road. Off in the distance, high-rise apartment buildings and unfinished construction projects create a snaggle-toothed skyline. The view is disappointing. When entering a city nicknamed, "The World's Workshop," you expect something grand. Instead, Dongguan is practically invisible. There are no tourist attractions, just factories. Everything exists to serve the factories.

The city is divided into 32 districts, each one specializing in a different kind of manufacturing. Cang-an produces electronic components, Humen is famous for high-dollar fashion, and Houjie makes shoes. The list goes on and on with more than 3,000 factories crammed into one city. Every district looks the



**AFTER HOURS** — Young factory workers hit the streets of Dongguan to eat and shop in the evenings. The city is also known for attracting wealthy factory owners to the city's hotels. "We need good, Christian businessmen to come and show them how they can find fulfillment," says a Southern Baptist worker in Dongguan. (IMB photo)

same: construction sites, cheap restaurants, factories, factories, and more factories. Southern Baptist worker David Rice (not his real name) sees this city through different eyes. His mental map of Dongguan is a labyrinth of ministry possibilities: a medical clinic here, management training classes over there, and maybe a Christian coffee shop in the heart of a red light district. The possibilities are endless. The impact on China is immeasurable. Rice believes that by reaching the factories with the Gospel an entire generation of migrant workers will take the message back to their villages, often so remote

that the villages are not even on a map, let alone on the radar of Christian strategists. "People come here from all over the country looking for a job," Rice says, noting in one year's time he has met at least one person from all 34 provinces. The name used for migrants — liudong renkou, or "floating population" — implies an aimless mob, but Rice sees a potential army of church planters. The Southern Baptist worker and his ministry partners see this group primed for making major changes in their lives. They are away from the strongholds of their culture back home. They are lonely and searching for meaning.

**Largest migration in human history**  
Lanying Wu (not her real name) openly admits she has no objectives or goals in her life. The 19-year-old factory worker deftly snips away at her sterile workstation, cutting the outline of a garment. A pile of hot-pink satin sits at her right while a crate of her finished work sits on the left. She left her village to make money for her family and to experience something different. Wu is a second-generation factory worker and part of the largest migration in human history. For the past three decades, Chinese migrants flocked from

See Dongguan on page two

**AT RIGHT: DONGGUAN SUNSET** — Factories line the evening skyline over Dongguan. The town is home to more than 3,000 factories across 32 districts, drawing hundreds of thousands of migrant workers from China's interior provinces. (IMB photo)



## A bucket of gold

America lost a much-loved entertainer in 2010 — Art Linkletter. I remember watching a show he hosted called, Kids Say the Darndest Things. Regardless of the topic, children would respond to his questions with honesty and openness.



**Wanda Lee**  
Executive Director  
/Treasurer  
Woman's  
Missionary Union  
auxiliary  
of the Southern  
Baptist  
Convention

Children are often busy trying to sort out the many things they are learning and are not afraid to articulate what they think and feel. While you couldn't help but laugh at their responses, often a deeper lesson emerged.

Recently Russell, my six-year-old grandson, was riding down the road with his grandfather when he asked a rather serious question: "Daka, what would you do if someone gave you a bucket full of gold coins?"

Realizing that many of their serious conversations take place while Russell is strapped in a car seat, his grandfather took a moment to give what he thought was a good answer for a child that age. Then he turned the question back to Russell and asked what he would do.

Without hesitation, Russell responded in a rather thoughtful tone, "I would keep one coin for myself and give the rest to my church so more missionaries could be sent."

What prompts a six-year-old to ask such a question? More importantly, what led him to his answer?

All of our life experiences shape the person we become. It is important to expose our children to as many good, positive learning environments as we possibly can. When I think about Russell's experiences so far, I realize his answer



came from the things to which he has been exposed through his family and the Baptist church he has attended all of his short life.

His parents have a missions heart and model that regularly with their actions. They involve both of their children in missions projects in the community. Their church engages its members in missions through giving, going on trips, and sharing their stories in worship services when they return.

They also believe in the importance of missions education. Russell has attended Missions Friends since he could walk into the classroom. He hears stories about missionaries and the places they serve on a regular basis. At age six, he is connecting the dots of what he experiences at church and what he hears in worship as Scripture is read and testimonies are shared, with what he is learning at home.

Russell knows that God's love is not just for him but for all the people of the world. As we focus attention in a special way during this Christmas season on the Week of Prayer for International Missions and giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, let's keep Russell's question before us.

What would you do if you had a bucket

full of gold coins?

*Editor's note: Southern Baptists' gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions and the Cooperative Program help Southern Baptist workers around the world share the Gospel. Give to the offering through your local Southern Baptist church or online at [imb.org/offering](http://imb.org/offering), where there are resources for church leaders to promote the offering. Download related videos at [imb.org/entirechurchvideo](http://imb.org/entirechurchvideo).*

## Dongguan

remote villages and farms to factories in an effort to make money and to better themselves.

The government estimates nearly 210 million migrants work in various "boomtowns" throughout the country.

When the economy is good, these migrant workers push Dongguan's population above 10 million. When times are bad, it can dip below six million.

The only constant number in this city is the 1.7 million local residents. Most return home after two years. Nearly all return home by the time they are 35, an age considered "ancient" in the nimble-fingered factory world.

This constant turnover makes Delun Kao (not his real name), a factory counselor and mentor, feel like he's always starting over and constantly training new leaders. In the past 12 years, Kao has watched more than 600 migrants come to Christ. He works with Rice to disciple the new believers and train them to start churches.

Through the years, Kao has seen the training model work as migrants return to their villages and start new fellowships. Still others switch factories and start churches in their new workplaces. Lately, it's been hard finding someone who will commit.

"We are sharing the Gospel in the hardest time — when hearts are not as pure or open," Kao says. "We have to pray and open their hearts so they will hear and receive."

Wu, like most migrants, scoffs at the thought of any

type of religion — her parents' Buddhist beliefs or any other. She attended a birthday party at her factory where she heard Jesus' name for the first time. The stories piqued her interest but not enough to give up overtime hours to go hear more.

For now, she depends only on herself and concentrates on earning as much money as she can.

### Money, money, money

Whether you are a poor migrant worker or a rich factory owner, the measurement for success is the same in this city — money.

"This city is all about money," an American factory owner says while sitting in the lobby of a lush, five-star hotel. "Things are cheap here: cheap production costs, cheap labor, even the girls are cheap."

A young woman walks across the lobby wearing a stylish T-shirt with glittery gold letters proclaiming, "I'm expensive." With vacant eyes and a plastered smile, the black-haired beauty clings to a businessman three times her age.

Sex is part of the business climate in this factory town. Deals are brokered in the private rooms of saunas and karaoke bars as scantily clad women parade past. Most of these young women left the factories to earn more money and work fewer hours.

"I think the men and women here are more open about greed and lust because they don't have religion," the 72-year-old factory owner says with a sly

smile as his "girl" comes to escort him to a business meeting. "They don't have to hassle with the guilt of sin."

### Never-ending task

Less than 43,000 in a city of millions claim Christ as their Savior.

"This is a never-ending task," Rice sighs and leans back against the taxi's bucket seat. His dreamy expression about sending Chinese missionaries back to remote villages wavers, but only for a second as he spies something new out the window.

"Look over there!" the Southern Baptist worker exclaims. "That would make a great spot for some volunteers to cut and style hair for the factory girls. The volunteers could tell the girls Bible stories while they get pampered."

Everywhere you look, there are still factories, construction sites, and of course more factories. A closer look, though, reveals an old section of town in the process of being reduced to rubble and replaced with modern high-rise apartments. On another stretch of road, people pour out of the factory gates after work, hitting the streets in search of meaning.

That's when it hits. Dongguan isn't invisible. It's unfinished, a city where everything and everyone is in the process of becoming something else.

### Prayer requests

• Pray for Wu's heart to open. Pray that in the process of recre-

ating herself in the city, she becomes a new creation in Christ. Pray that other migrant workers will hear and receive the Gospel.

• Pray for those returning to villages with the Gospel message. Pray for resolve and spirit-filled words as they seek to bring abundant life to friends and family. Pray that as migrants return home, new communities of believers will be planted in villages that otherwise would never have opportunity to hear the Gospel.

• Pray the young women involved in the sex industry in Dongguan will turn from the desire for physical wealth and seek spiritual wealth in Christ. Pray for the men dominated by greed and lust that breed in hearts empty of Christ. Pray God will give Christian businessmen the strength to stand firm against the city's two biggest temptations and remain faithful to Him and their wives.

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## London missionaries push through barriers

### As many as 200 language groups present challenges

LONDON (BP) — Descend into the extensive London underground transport system, and only station names on tiled walls tell what lies above ground.

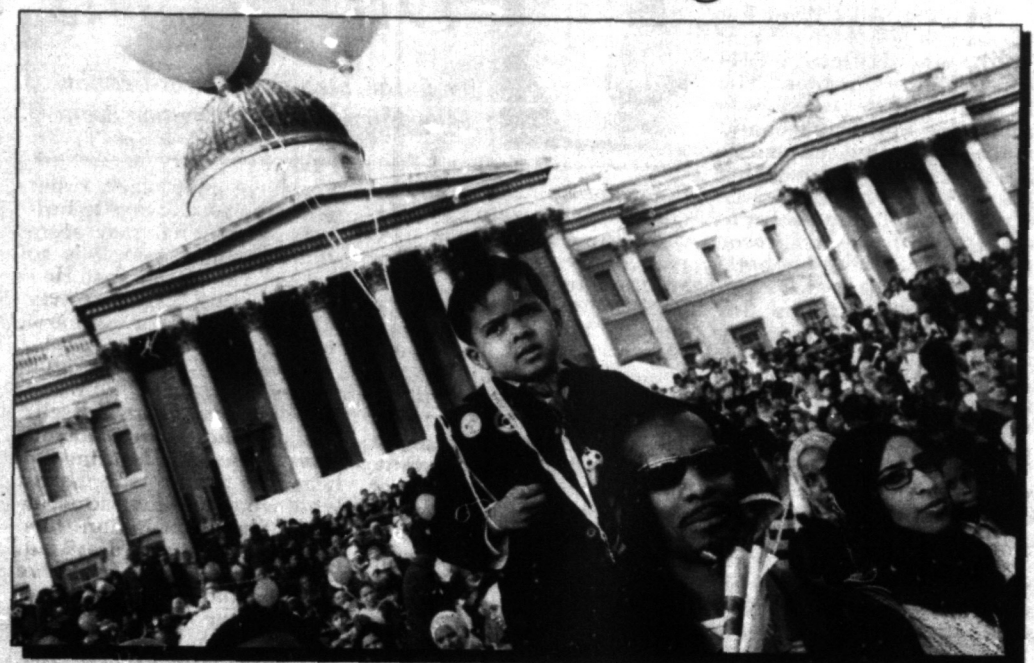
Signs for "Victoria" and "Waterloo" signal bustling railway stations above. Climb the steps from the Oxford and Piccadilly Circus underground stations to reach premier shopping districts in the City. The Green Park station exit leads to a walk through tree-lined park paths to the ornate gates of Buckingham Palace.

Passengers squeezing onto the crowded trains also hint at what lies above. They vary according to the neighborhoods and boroughs that the trains speed through.

Well-tailored businessmen reading the Financial Times appear in lines snaking through the business district or near Canary Wharf. Ride the District line to the Embankment stop and tourists fill the car, clutching maps and guidebooks, ready for their first glimpses of Big Ben.

Head toward East London and the passenger balance shifts to Muslim women wearing hijabs and men, many bearded, wearing skull caps. Ride the underground tracks westward on the Central line and South Asians may predominate as the line heads toward Little India.

Pockets of unreached peoples in urban environments like



**TRAFALGAR CELEBRATION** — Thousands of Muslims gather in historic Trafalgar Square to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr, a Muslim holiday that marks the end of Ramadan, the holy month of fasting. The mayor of London has sponsored the event in recent years that features dancing, singing, speakers, prayers, and ethnic foods. London, like many large cities in the West, has seen a large influx of immigrants from around the world in recent years. (IMB photo)

London bring unique challenges to missionaries as they look for ways to build relationships and effectively share the Gospel. London, Europe's largest urban zone, demonstrates the reality that more than 50% of the world's population now live in urban centers like this centuries-old city. The London-based National Centre for Languages estimates that schoolchildren in London speak more than 200 languages.

For Tony Collins (not his real name), an International Mission Board (IMB) worker, moving to London became a strategic decision when he and

his wife Christine (not her real name) discovered they could not return to Central Asia. They had served there for six years, learning the language and living among the people to whom God had called them to share the Good News. Medical issues with one of their children forced them to move.

Tony and Christine prayed about five different cities that had significant populations of their people group. They visited the strongest contenders which included Moscow, Athens, and London.

London best fit what they were looking for. Here they can connect with their people group by working in the communities where Central Asians live, by visiting local holding facilities for Central Asian refugees, and by providing language help to immigrants learning to operate in an English-speaking environment.

"What I've learned is, if you get to know five Central Asians, and you really get to know them well and their families, you don't really need to (seek out) more," Tony says. Because Central Asians are such relational people, once there is a foundation of trust and understanding in a relationship, the connections go deep, he explains.

"Then you get connected with all their relatives, all their friends. It really travels fast."

With London's urban zone of nearly 12 million, it's this convergence of cultures, peoples, and religions from all over the world that makes London the mission field it is today.

*Editor's note: Learn more about London at [wmu.com/London](http://wmu.com/London). The city is the focus of the International Mission Study 2011 by the Woman's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention.*

## Looking back

### 10 years ago

The Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force is called to perform double duty shortly after a series of severe storms and tornadoes struck the state on November 24, killing at least five people and destroying or damaging hundreds of homes in eight Mississippi counties.

### 20 years ago

If revival doesn't sweep the world in 1992, it won't be for lack of effort on the part of Dan Jarvis. Jarvis, a 12-year-old boy from Seville, Ohio, is calling the world to fasting and prayer on Jan. 25, 1992, with the goal of sparking world revival.

### 30 years ago

Gregory Walcott, actor in The Rifleman, Bonanza, and a host of other TV series, is the featured speaker at M Night at the Lauderdale Baptist Training Union meeting on Dec. 2. Walcott is a charter member, deacon, and chairman of the pulpit committee of the Beverly Hills Baptist Church in California.



## THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

DECEMBER 8, 2011

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YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.







# 2012 STATE EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

JANUARY 29-30  
BRANDON BAPTIST CHURCH, BRANDON, MISS.

*A Life, A Cross, A Tomb, A Living Lord!*



Jim Futral Junior Hill Kevin Hamm Bill Stafford Sammy Gilbreath Mickey Dalrymple Marc Ivey

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39201

## TRANSITIONAL PASTOR TRAINING

February 6-8, 2012

Thirty-Eighth Avenue Baptist Church  
Hattiesburg, Mississippi

Cost: \$99

Early Bird Special (By December 31, 2011) \$75

Cost includes materials, conference fees. Meanders supply Tuesday lunch, Wednesday lunch (local snack).

Training begins at 1:30 p.m. on February 6 and ends at 3 p.m. on February 8.

Contact Bruce Cappleman at [bcappleman@mbcb.org](mailto:bcappleman@mbcb.org) or Carol Taylor at [ctaylor@mbcb.org](mailto:ctaylor@mbcb.org) or call (800) 958-1000 or (800) 748-1651 to register.

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To order, contact Lisa Leavelle in the Stewardship Department at 601.292.3347 or [lleavelle@mbcb.org](mailto:lleavelle@mbcb.org)

COMING SOON!

MISSIONARY MOMENTS PRAYER GUIDE



## YOUTH EVANGELISM CHALLENGE

TEAM IMPACT

TI

*Amazing Wonders* 2012 VBS KICK OFF  
FOR ALL VBS LEADERS

Watch amazing things happen as your kids come closer to God than ever before. You will see lives changed as kids tour some of the world's most marvelous natural wonders and explore God's awesome power as they learn to trust and recognize Him in their everyday lives.

March 1, 2012  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
Longview Heights Baptist Church  
Olive Branch, Miss.

March 3, 2012  
9 a.m. - noon  
First Baptist Church  
Richland, Miss.  
1102 Hwy 49 S

VBS materials will be on display and available to purchase from LifeWay Christian Resources. An overview of LifeWay Curriculum, Worship Rally, Crafts, and Snacks. Training Sessions for Evangelism, Promotion, and Decorations. Local users of non-LifeWay curriculum will share.

For more information contact Angie Boydston at [aboyston@mbcb.org](mailto:aboyston@mbcb.org) or Lee Ann Boykin at [lboykin@mbcb.org](mailto:lboykin@mbcb.org) or call (800) 748-1651, ext. 292, or 601-292-1292. Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39201.

DECEMBER 29-30, 2011

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE • CLINTON, MISS.

REGISTRATION BEGINS  
Thurs., Dec. 29, 1:30 p.m.

CHALLENGE CONCLUDES  
Fri., Dec. 30, 12:30 p.m.

## 2012 OPPORTUNITIES LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Pastor/Leadership Development Department  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Go to [www.mbcb.org](http://www.mbcb.org) • Church Growth/Pastor Leadership Development Department to find the listing of our 2012 Opportunities brochure, or call 1-800-748-1651, ext. 305 to request a copy.

"...Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant."  
Mark 10:43

"Impacting the World Around Me"

Isaiah 43:18&19

## 8th Annual Senior Adult Evangelism Rally

TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2012  
BRANDON BAPTIST CHURCH

- 8:00 A.M. REGISTRATION/REFRESHMENTS
- 8:15 EARLY BIRD:  
"FUN TIME SHARING THE GOOD NEWS"  
KANDI FARRIS, GULFPORT  
(AUTHOR OF NEVER THE LESS—THAT'LL PREACH!)
- 8:45 GENERAL ASSEMBLY
- 9:00 BREAK-OUTS:  
"IT'S NOT TOO LATE FOR GLOBAL MISSIONS"  
SHEER AND BRUCE BURK, MISSIONARIES TO NEPAL, INDIA  
"GRANDPARENTING: BIBLE STORYTELLING"  
PAULIA SMITH, WMU, MBCB  
"FUN TIME SHARING THE GOOD NEWS" (REPEAT)  
KANDI FARRIS, GULFPORT

10:00 BREAK (REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED BY MS BAPTIST FOUNDATION)

10:45 WORSHIP CELEBRATION RALLY  
MUSIC: LINCOLN CORALE, BROOKHAVEN  
PREACHER: BILLY HATLEY, BIRMINGHAM, Ala.  
SENIOR ADULT COORDINATOR FOR SCOTT DAWSON EVANGELISTIC ASSOCIATION

11:45 ADJOURN

For more information contact: [gshows@mbcb.org](mailto:gshows@mbcb.org) or 800.748.1651, ext. 284



## Pray this day for...

*"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."*  
Isaiah 9:6

Pray for: **Mike and Linda Ray**, IMB missionaries ministering to European Peoples in Ukraine through strategy coordination, church and home outreach, and evangelism.

Lottie Moon, namesake of our international missions offering, was born Dec. 12, 1840. Pray that believers today will respond to God's call and give as He leads, to further His kingdom.

Pray for: **Steven\* and Nickolee\* Roberts**, IMB missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples in the United States through church planting, church and home outreach, and evangelism.

Pray for: **Marty\* and Mary\* Roberts**, IMB missionaries ministering to European Peoples in the United States through strategy coordination, church and home outreach, and evangelism.

Pray for: **Steven\* and Ruth\* Robertson**, IMB missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples in the United States through church and home outreach, evangelism, and financial administration support.

Pray for: **Burton\* and Margaret Schmitz**, IMB missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples in Senegal through church and home outreach, and evangelism.

Pray for: **George and Geraldine\* Smith**, IMB missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples in Uganda through church planting, church and home outreach, and evangelism.

Pray for: **Janna Smith\***, IMB missionary ministering to American Peoples in Mexico through church planting.

Pray for all of our international missionaries who are apart from their families at Christmas time as they carry out God's call on their lives. Pray for the families here stateside as they miss their loved ones who serve.

Pray for: **Thomas Smith\***, IMB missionary ministering to American Peoples in Peru by providing regional office support.

Pray for: **Lane Vance\***, IMB missionary ministering to European Peoples in France through evangelism.

Pray for: **David\* and Regina\* White**, IMB missionaries ministering to American Peoples in the United States through church planting, church and home outreach, and evangelism.

Pray for: **Floyd and Sylvia\* Wingo**, IMB missionaries ministering to American Peoples in Brazil through church and home outreach, and evangelism.

Pray for all of the people who will visit churches at Christmas time and no other. Ask the Lord to open their hearts to the messages that will be preached around the world.

Praise and thank God for sending His son, Jesus.  
Merry Christmas!

Pray for: **Paul and Donna\* Worsham**, IMB missionaries ministering to American Peoples in Mexico through church planting, church and home outreach, and evangelism.

Pray for: **Arnold\* and Margie\* Austin**, IMB missionaries ministering to American Peoples in Peru through community, church and home outreach, and evangelism.

Pray for: **Richard and Martha\* Beal**, IMB missionaries ministering to American Peoples in the United States through church and home outreach, and serving through financial administration.

Pray for: **David and Laurie\* Bledsoe**, IMB missionaries ministering to American Peoples in Brazil through church and home outreach, and evangelism.

Dec. 9 - 29, 2011

Pray for: **Tracy and Eugenia\* Putnam**, IMB missionaries ministering to European Peoples in Russia through theological education, church and home outreach, and evangelism.

Pray for: **Michael\* and Annette\* Racey**, IMB missionaries ministering to American Peoples in the United States through church and home outreach, and evangelism.



1. McKinney ordination

1. **First Church, Nettleton**, recently ordained Jason McKinney as deacon. Shown are George Johnson, McKinney, and pastor Donald Penders.
2. **Worshippers at Riverport Church, Greenville**, are shown leaving the morning worship service being greeted by Mission Friends, RAs, and GAs receiving a special offering for World Hunger Day. The young people collected \$97.40, which was rounded up to a \$100 special offering.

## The region's top doctors work at Baptist.

Columbus  
**GOLDEN TRIANGLE CARDIOLOGY**  
Joan Chang, MD, Interventional Cardiology  
255 Varsity Blvd., Suite 401, MS 39705  
662-244-2870

**GOLDEN TRIANGLE CARDIOVASCULAR & VASCULAR SURGERY**  
Edward Crocker, MD  
255 Baptist Blvd., Suite 401, MS 39705  
662-244-2288

**GOLDEN TRIANGLE FAMILY MEDICINE**  
Kevin Johnson, DO  
2402 Fifth Street N., MS 39705  
662-241-6192

**GOLDEN TRIANGLE GENERAL & VASCULAR SURGERY**  
Jan McClanahan, MD  
Richard Vallette, MD  
255 Baptist Blvd., Suite 407, MS 39705  
662-241-4223

**GOLDEN TRIANGLE HOSPITALISTS**  
Brend Brown, MD  
Raphael Buzby, MD, Pediatrics  
Jason Dunn, DO  
Sandra McCarley, MD  
Charles McCallum, MD  
John Reed, Jr., MD  
Russell Reed, MD  
John Thomas Saxon, MD  
James Towery, MD  
Matthew Wade, MD  
2520 Fifth Street North, MS 39705  
662-244-2042

**GOLDEN TRIANGLE INTERNAL MEDICINE**  
Brett Brown, MD  
Autaw Dill, MD  
Jacqueline Hampton, MD  
Min Kim, MD  
Christina Collins, MD  
Internal Medicine & Pediatrics  
2600 Fifth Street North, MS 39705, 662-244-2960

**GOLDEN TRIANGLE ONCOLOGY**  
Wall Almas, MD, Hematology & Oncology  
Vaimalia Matthews-Smith, MD  
Hematology & Oncology  
345 Baptist Blvd., MS 39705  
662-244-4673

**GOLDEN TRIANGLE SPINE & NEUROSURGERY**  
Richard Mendel, MD  
255 Baptist Blvd., Suite 305, MS 39705  
662-244-2550

**COLUMBUS CARDIOVASCULAR CARE**  
Michael J. Boland, MD  
John King, MD  
225 Baptist Blvd., Suite 402, MS 39705  
662-240-1412

**Desoto CARDIOVASCULAR SURGERY**  
Rodney Y. Wolf, MD  
7601 Southcrest Parkway Southaven, MS 38671  
662-722-2980

**GENERAL SURGERY**  
Leander Grinn, MD  
401 Southcrest Circle, Suite 204  
Southaven, MS 38671  
662-349-0311

**HOSPITALISTS**  
Kenneth Edmunds, MD  
Syed Norman Holder, MD  
Fahia Khalifa, MD  
Muhammad Mirza, MD  
Mukesh Jain, MD  
Ayasha Muzammil, MD  
Cleo Newman, MD  
Michael Puchner, MD  
Shahnila Raza, MD  
Hillel Wiener, DO  
7601 Southcrest Parkway Southaven, MS 38671  
662-772-2980

**NEW ALBANY AUDIOLOGY**  
Krishe L. Boren, AuD  
452 West Bankhead, MS 38652  
662-534-3724

**GENERAL SURGERY**  
Guy Farmer, DO  
232 Starlyn Ave., MS 38652  
662-534-5891

**EAR, NOSE & THROAT**  
Shane Tucker, MD  
452 West Bankhead, MS 38652  
662-534-3724

**Oxford CARDIOVASCULAR & THORACIC SURGERY**  
Lawrence Deese, MD  
2301 South Lamar, Suite 140, MS 38655  
662-513-3246

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Brett Lampton, MD  
Amanda Lea, DO  
James Thompson, MD  
Brian Wall, MD  
James Benjamin Walker, MD  
2301 South Lamar, Suite 100, MS 38655  
662-232-8568, MS 38655

**PULMONOLOGY**  
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Jeff Evans, MD  
Michael Wilson, MD  
2301 South Lamar, Suite 100, MS 38655  
662-234-0119

**Pontotoc FAMILY MEDICINE**  
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Grace Amy Seacharan, MD  
353 Hwy 15 N., MS 38863  
662-489-4460

**GENERAL SURGERY**  
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662-534-5891

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James Thompson, MD  
Brian Wall, MD  
James Benjamin Walker, MD  
2301 South Lamar, Suite 100, MS 38655  
662-232-8568, MS 38655

**PULMONOLOGY**  
Mohammed Al Farawati, MD  
Jeff Evans, MD  
Michael Wilson, MD  
2301 South Lamar, Suite 100, MS 38655  
662-234-0119

**Pontotoc FAMILY MEDICINE**  
Robert Carter, MD  
Grace Amy Seacharan, MD  
353 Hwy 15 N., MS 38863  
662-489-4460

## JUST FOR THE RECORD

ing worship service being greeted by Mission Friends, RAs, and GAs receiving a special offering for World Hunger Day. The young people collected \$97.40, which was rounded up to a \$100 special offering.

3. **Sunrise Church, Leake**, recognized Mission Friends in September. Shown are the Mission Friends and their leaders.

4. **Clear Branch Church, Florence**, will have a live nativity at the Old Ross Feedmill building from 6 - 8:30 p.m. Dec. 9 with light refreshments served at the fire department.

5. The youth of **Singleton Church, Louisville**, led the morning worship service Nov. 6. Shown are Michael Fuller, Whitney Palmer, Brett Perkins, and Lydia Palmer.

6. **Heavens Grace Quartet** ministered to the LLL Club of **Eastside Church, Pearl**, Nov. 10. For information on the quartet, call Raymond Dyess at (601) 939-2175.



2. Riverport Church, Greenville



3. Sunrise Church, Leake



5. Singleton Church, Louisville

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## STAFF CHANGES

1. **Rocky Mount Church, Calhoun County**, has called Larry W. Haggard as Pastor effective October 2. He and his wife Susie moved from West Point where he was serving as Children and Youth Coordinator at Faith Church.

**Record**

\*These International Mission Board missionaries claim Mississippi as their home state. The IMB missionaries listed in the HouseTops prayer calendar are currently active in 2-4 year terms or in career service.

**Witnessing Through Media**  
Awards and Workshop  
May 4-5, 2012  
Colonial Heights Baptist Church  
Ridgeland, Miss.

**BANQUET AND WORKSHOP**

- Banquet and workshop registration deadline is April 20, 2012
- Registration for all activities (Banquet and Workshop) is \$30 per person
- Friday Awards Banquet only or Saturday Workshop only is \$20 per person

WATCH FOR MORE INFORMATION  
COMING TO YOUR MAILBOX SOON!  
WWW.MBCB.ORG

**2-1-04**  
**MR. JOSHUA A. SCHMITZ**  
Parents: Burton & Suzanne  
Sub-Saharan African Peoples

**2-2-07**  
**MISS ALESSIA WORTHY**  
Parents: Charlie & Shannon  
European Peoples

**2-12-03**  
**MISS REBEKAH J. SCHMITZ**  
Parents: Burton & Suzanne  
Sub-Saharan African Peoples

**02-12-06**  
**MR. LAMAR**  
Parents: C & C  
Restricted

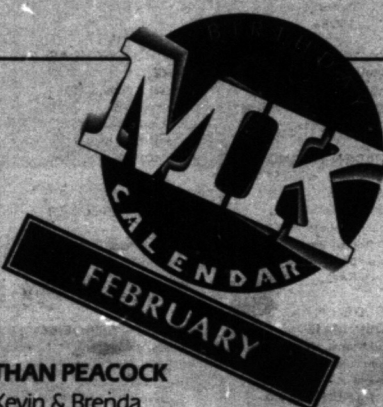
**2-16-01**  
**MR. HADDON BLEDSOE**  
Parents: David & Laurie  
American Peoples

**2-24-00**  
**MR. NATHAN PEACOCK**  
Parents: Kevin & Brenda  
European Peoples

## Encourage an MK with a card!

FOR SECURITY, cards will be forwarded. Please send all to: Child's name, Parent's name, MBCB WMU MK Birthdays, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205. PLEASE NOTE: Church members may send a package of cards together; cards do not have to be sent individually to the WMU. Individual cards do not need postage stamps when sent as a package to MS WMU.

► Please include your return address on each card envelope. MKs and their parents may wish to send you an update or note of appreciation.



HOUSE TOPS



# THE VILLAGE VIEW



Dr. Rory Lee, Executive Director

P.O. Box 27  
Clinton, MS 39060-0027  
(601) 922-2242

www.baptistchildrensvillage.com

## GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

### OCTOBER 2011

#### MEMORIALS

Jessica Gurley  
Mrs. Barbara B. Easterling  
David Hannabass  
Anonymous  
Mrs. Carlena C. Hardin  
Jimmy & Jo Jenkins  
Ms. Peggy M. Hindman  
Robert & Jeanette Alexander  
Mrs. Rita D. Long  
Gerry Hardin  
Walter & Margaret McCool  
Linda Hardy  
East Louisville BC  
Drew Harrington  
Mr. & Mrs. Jackie Wooley  
& Jorian  
Belinda Henderson  
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest L. Scruggs  
Tammy Higginbotham  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles F. Davis  
Fannie Hissaw  
East Louisville BC  
Mrs. Joyce Holder  
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth T. Posey  
Ernestine Holland  
Bob & Betty Goodman  
Mr. Danny Holloway  
Jimmy & Jo Jenkins  
Melissa Reynolds Howell  
Jimmy & Jo Jenkins  
Jackie Ingold  
John & Nancy Miller  
Marlin Ivey  
Frank & Sandra Crosthwait  
Theodore R. Jackson  
Mike, Janis & Ben Goff  
Billy James  
Sharon & Herman Dungan  
Josh Jamison  
Mrs. Era C. Peters  
Barbara Jenkins  
Jimmy & Jo Jenkins  
Bruce "Choppy" Johnson  
Mr. & Mrs. Joel A. Williams

Diane Kasmarik  
Mr. James Sturley  
Matthew Kirk  
Brian, Teri & Walker Manning  
Myrtilla Kirk  
Mrs. Ruth B. Jefcoat  
Patricia Kirkland  
Mr. & Mrs. Horace K. Worthy  
W. B. Knight  
Mr. & Mrs. John F. Miller Jr.  
Lois E. Kruger  
Pedro & Janet Aguilar  
Carson Brayden Lynn  
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Fortenberry  
Christopher Michael Lynn  
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Fortenberry  
Larue Magee  
Mr. & Mrs. James R. Dale  
Jo Ann Manor  
Mr. Robert A. Manor  
Mrs. Ida May  
Bob & Sandra Kyzar  
Mrs. Louise McCammon  
Mrs. Jean S. Moss  
Mrs. Annie P. McDaniel  
Jimmy & Jo Jenkins  
Mrs. Bob (Nancy) McKee  
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur D. Burnett  
Carol Causey Meadors  
Upland Community Church  
Dr. Diane M. Walker  
Catherine & Mike Madden  
Mr. & Mrs. Ron Rash  
Ms. Doris H. Sutherland  
Tommy Merriman  
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest L. Scruggs  
Mrs. Dottie Miller  
Mr. & Mrs. Floyd E. Fuqua Jr.  
Robert J. Mishler  
Jimmy & Cynthia Wilkinson  
Dr. Merwin Moore  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry M. Howell

Willie F. Moree  
Mr. & Mrs. Olen S. Broom  
Terrell Morgan  
Mrs. Charlotte Vickers  
Charles Moulder  
Keith & Elizabeth Sangwin  
Mrs. Zeldia D. Myrick  
Jimmy & Jo Jenkins  
Lloyd Nations  
Gary, Tonya, Clint & Caroline Stewart  
Mrs. Ruth Nesbit  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry M. Howell  
Mr. Jeff Nettles  
Rudy & Tommye Lou Grenn  
Lanora Nevels  
Ms. Carolyn J. Cox  
Jo Pearl Odom  
Branch 1374, NALC  
Ruth SSC, Petal Harvey BC, Petal  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles E. Blackwell  
Sue & Jack Bush  
Mrs. Jo Pearl Odom  
Mr. & Mrs. Willie H. Ratliff  
Leland Sam Oglesby  
Mrs. Dorothy Gilbert  
Martha Orlick  
Jimmy & Bonnie Hollingsworth  
Otis Orr  
Concord BC, McCall Creek  
Lena Overby  
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Cunningham  
Margaret Palmer  
Siloam BC, Meadville  
Mr. Andy Palmer  
Jimmy & Jo Jenkins  
Henry Parish  
Mrs. Helen Brown  
Mary Geneva Parrish  
Gene & Giulia Saucier  
Linda Pearson  
Mr. C. H. Smith  
Pearline Pearson  
Mrs. Virginia Fair  
Mr. Bill Pittman  
Bob & Sandra Kyzar  
Ms. Mae Pollard  
Mr. & Mrs. James C. Bents Jr.  
Anice Powell  
Mr. & Mrs. John F. Miller Jr.  
Mr. Will Price  
Ms. Betty T. Healy  
Jimmy Priest  
Ms. Margaret H. Durham  
James W. Pryor  
Mrs. Walter B. Moore  
Greg & Cheryl Moore  
Skip & Dalma Moore  
Barney Purvis  
Lori & Billy Barnett  
Mr. Charles Ray  
Jimmy & Jo Jenkins  
Mrs. Richie Richards  
Hank & Becky Peebles  
Bessie Nell Richardson  
Mrs. Mary K. McWilliams  
Joseph Allen Rollins  
Mrs. Elizabeth Taylor  
Markay Rushing  
Mrs. Irene K. Smith  
Mr. Jewel Rushing  
Ad 7 SS Dept., FBC  
McComb  
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T.E.L. SSC, Springfield BC  
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Wayne & Elaine West  
Mrs. Gwen Booth Wilson  
Mr. & Mrs. George R. Faulk  
Dr. Frank Young  
Jimmy & Billie Breland

## Every good and perfect gift comes from above. James 1:17a

Dear Mississippi Baptists,

Over the years I have asked our BCV children what their biggest wish would be for Christmas. Many give the typical answer of an expensive toy, electronic gadget or the latest fashion. However, it never fails that some children say their biggest wish and best gift ever would be to have their family together. Recently, Amanda learned what it is to receive the best Christmas gift ever...

*She now has a new family.*

I hope Amanda's incredible story encourages you to give a gift this year that will help change another life.

Amanda is looking forward to her first Christmas with her new family — mom, dad, siblings and extended family. They will exchange presents, eat a big dinner, read the Christmas story and celebrate this special time together.

*Amanda will have much to celebrate on Christ's birthday because she knows what an amazing gift God has given her.*

Orphaned at a tender age, Amanda's story wasn't always a happy one. Having no extended family to care for her, Amanda was left in the "system" — *no loving parents, no permanent home, little stability and an uncertain future.*

By the time Amanda came to The Baptist Children's Village, she had experienced more loss, hurt and disappointment in her young life than most people will in a lifetime.

**God had a good and perfect gift planned for Amanda**

Your support of The Baptist Children's Village helped provide Amanda a safe haven and a second chance. While at The BCV she received love and encouragement and was taught about God's love for her.

With the emotional support of The BCV staff, Amanda's past hurts and disappointments began to heal. The changes in her were amazing. *This support for Amanda could not have happened without your help.*

Can other hurting children like Amanda count on your help this Christmas? Please send a gift of \$10, \$20, or more to provide a safe haven and the love these children so desperately need.

Amanda's story has a very special ending. God gave her the gift of a new family. With the blessing and support of The Baptist Children's Village she left our care to be in this season of her life with her new family.

**Your support helped change Amanda's life.**

Thank you for loving and supporting Mississippi's hurting children this Christmas.

Wishing you and your family a Merry Christmas,

*Celeste Cade*

Celeste Cade, Public Relations Associate

P.S. God has good and perfect gifts for all His children. Help us give other hurting children like Amanda the a safe and loving home at The Baptist Children's Village. Please send a generous gift today. Thank you!  
*\*Photo and name used are representations and not actually that of children in the care of The BCV to protect their confidentiality.*



## BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Receive God's Gift  
Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:28-28

By Burn Page

This lesson focuses on the blessings of God that come through faithfulness and obedience in spite of fear and doubt. In Matthew's record Joseph was told "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife" (v. 20), and in Luke's account the angel told Mary "do not be afraid for you have found favor with God" (v. 30). Joseph and Mary responded in faith in spite of their fear.

Matthew described the birth (genesis) of Jesus Christ against the backdrop of Jewish marriage customs. Marriage contracts were arranged by parents, and a fee was paid to the girl's parents because they were losing a daughter and a helper while the son's family was gaining one. This agreement would take place usually when the girl was about

thirteen years old. For the next year the young girl would continue to live with her parents and the young man with his parents although they were referred to as "husband and wife." This one year period was to prove or guarantee the purity of the bride. After the engagement year passed, the man would go to the home of his wife's parents and with a grand procession take her to his home and consummate the marriage. However, should she become pregnant during this time by another man, it would be considered an act of adultery, and a divorce would take place to void the marriage contract previously agreed upon.

In the case of Mary and Joseph, during this one-year waiting period ("before they



Page

came together"), Mary was found to be with child. Because Joseph was a man of character or a godly man (righteous), he decided to divorce her quietly rather than expose her publicly for presumably being unfaithful. Had he exposed her, Mary could have been stoned and killed according to Deut. 22:23-24. Then Joseph had a dream in which an angel of the Lord told him to not be afraid to take Mary (to his house) to be his wife because that which was in her was conceived by the agency of the Holy Spirit. In Luke's account, Gabriel also told Mary that the Holy Spirit would come upon her "with the power of the Most High." It is to be noted that we do not have here the pagan notion of a god having sexual relations with a woman but rather the creative power of God at work within Mary to accomplish his purpose (Hagner).

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE Stay On Track with God's GPS

Numbers 9:1-11a, 15-19

By Melleen Moore

My Dad was a proud man of German decent. He was a hard working farmer who prided himself in being honest, fair and productive. Having grown up on a farm under his supervision, there was never a doubt about his expectations. He provided the guidance and discipline to 'stay on track.' Moses through God's guidance provided leadership for the children of Israel and their departure from Egypt. Our lesson this week encourages us to seek and follow God's guidance to 'stay on track.'

**When Commands are Clear: Obey**  
Numbers 9:1-5

Our scripture in verse one makes it very clear that God spoke to Moses. It also gave

timing, situation and location. The first month of the second year suggest an anniversary was about to occur. The situation was celebrating the departure from Egypt. And the location was the Sinai Wilderness where it is thought the Israelites had been camped for several months. Observing the Passover was a time of remembering and reflecting on the deliverance from slavery. God's clear command was to "keep the Passover at its appointed time" (Numbers 9:25, NKJV). This was the second Passover, the first of which was in Egypt, when the death angel passed over the door marked with blood. Noting that the observance was to be on the fourteenth day of the month, God must have spoken to



Moore

Moses about the Passover celebration on the first of the month so a lamb could be selected and observed to be free of blemish in preparation for the Passover celebration. We find sound advice for Christians today in verses four and five with Moses telling the Israelites to observe the Passover and they did it as instructed. Do we respond that quickly to God's commands?

**When Complications Arise: Pray**  
Numbers 9: 6-11a

Just as there was instructions on the timing of the Passover there was also instructions on being ceremonially clean. Much is written in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers about these requirements. Moses and Aaron were approached by some men who were unclean from exposure to a human corpse. As explained in Numbers

There would be a lot of misunderstanding in the community for Joseph to take Mary to his home before the one-year engagement was up, and there would be much gossip at the well but Joseph knew the true story of Mary's pregnancy and he was more concerned with pleasing God than pleasing man.

According to Luke, the angel Gabriel was sent to Mary in the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy. Elizabeth was barren and Mary was a virgin (repeatedly stressed: twice in verse 27 and again in verse 34 to underline the magnitude of the miracle); however, God proved that both of these obstacles can be overcome because "nothing is impossible with God" (Lk. 1:37).

Mary was said to be "highly favored," or "privileged," or "endowed with grace." Joseph was called "righteous." She and Joseph acted in faith and obedience and God used them in his eternal plan to send Jesus, "Son of David," "Son of God," to "save his people from their sins." As a result of their actions, we are all

19:11, having touched a corpse one would be unclean for seven days. They questioned being excluded from bringing an offering at the appointed time as they seriously wanted to participate. Wisely, Moses answer was to wait as he sought instructions from God. God's instructions were clear to all Israelites who had touched a corpse or were traveling a distance away. They too, could observe the Passover one month later at the same time of the month. God did not alter the standard acceptable but gave a second opportunity to celebrate the Passover. Do we pray things thorough?

**When Guidance is Delayed: Stay**  
Numbers 9: 15-19

Delaying and staying simply mean to remain. God has stayed the cloud by day and pillar of fire by night over the tabernacle. The cloud is mentioned in Exodus 13:21 as the children of Israel approached the wilderness on their journey to the promise land. This

recipients of God's grace. May we receive God's gift of grace (His Son) and be willing to be used so that through us, God's grace may be extended to others.

At Mississippi College, students will often ask me about discerning God's will or understanding God's leading in their lives. I am amazed and inspired by their passion to follow Christ even when they don't understand exactly where he is leading them. I tell them to say, "Lord, my answer is 'yes,' now what is the question? Then when God asks, 'Will you serve me... in the local church?... on an international mission field?... in a hospital?... in a classroom?... in a board room?', the student will have decided already that the answer is 'yes.' 'Yes, I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me according to your word' (cf. Lk. 1:38).

*Page is chair of the Department of Christian Studies and Philosophy at Mississippi College and a member of First Church, Clinton.*

## Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

# The Baptist Record

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if

submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lit. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.



## JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Pender ordination

1. **Providence Church, Meadville**, ordained David Pender to the gospel ministry Nov. 20. He has served as minister of youth at the church for the past year. Shown are Jamie Pender, Pender, and pastor Charlie Seale.

2. **East Columbia Church, Columbia**, recently ordained Dave Nichols II to the gospel ministry. Shown are Donna Nichols, Nichols, and pastor Tim Morrison.

3. **First Church, Aberdeen**, recently ordained Norman Smith as deacon. Shown are Robert Fowlkes, Smith, Gail Smith, and pastor Roy McKay.

4. **Silver Creek Church, Pike County**, ordained Robin Patten as deacon. Shown with Patten are his wife Robbie and pastor Jimmy Smith.

5. **Holly Church, Alcorn**, ordained Keith Fields to the gospel ministry Nov. 27. He has been called as pastor of First Church, Biggersville, along with his wife, Heather, and daughter, Victoria.



2. Nichols ordination



4. Patten ordination



3. Smith ordination



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# Record

THE BAPTIST

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION  
JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION  
DECEMBER 21, 2011  
VOL. 135  
NO. 49

CE 1877  
5, 2011  
VOL. 135  
No. 49



## YEC presents Team Impact



TEAM  
IMPACT



### Annual MBCB Evangelism Dept. event also features speakers, worship

By William H. Perkins Jr.  
Editor

Team Impact will headline the 2011 Youth Evangelism Challenge (YEC) on Dec. 29-30 in A.E. Wood Coliseum on the campus of Mississippi College in Clinton.

Based in Coppell, Texas, Team Impact is an assemblage of world-class athletes performing strength and agility exercises not only for the entertainment of attendees but also to bring the Gospel to people who are not drawn to a church or religious setting.

"Team Impact has learned that if you get a person's attention, they will listen to what you have to say. And Team Impact has found a way to get a person's attention," according to the ministry's web site. "Our unique style of ministry uses the talents of elite athletes performing a mesmerizing production that demands the attention of young and old alike."

"The appeal is nearly irresistible, especially for those who would normally never attend church. While the method may be different, the appeal remains the same — salvation through grace through faith in Jesus Christ."

YEC featured speakers include:

- Paul Barnard, pastor of Overflow Church, Magee.

- Justin and Bethany Pigott, Fellowship of Christian Athletes leaders at Mississippi College in Clinton.

- Mark Roberts of First Priority of America in Orlando.

The Nolan Bishop Family Band of Magee will lead praise and worship. "With a heart to lead worshippers into the presence of God, the Nolan Bishop Family Band has found purpose and direction that God has placed on their family," their web site states. "Together they travel the United States in full-time ministry as worship leaders for an array of ministry events."

The annual event is sponsored by the Evangelism Department

of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) in Jackson and Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College.

Don Lum, MBCB director of evangelism, said YEC is open to all churches, especially churches with smaller youth groups that don't get to take many trips together. "A church with five members in the youth group can get together, make a motel reservation, and attend two days of worship, praise, and teaching with 1,400 other young people at a reasonable cost per student," he said.

Walk-up registration on the day of the event is \$15 per person, he said.

Coordinating the event for 2011 are Shannon Slover, minister of youth at First Church, Laurel, and Brad Van Cleve, minister of youth at First Church, Magee.

For more information including nearby overnight accommodations and eateries, visit [www.mbc.org](http://www.mbc.org) and click on Youth Evangelism Challenge in the Upcoming Events box on the upper right side of the page. E-mail: [jellis@mbcb.org](mailto:jellis@mbcb.org). Telephone: (601) 292-3278 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 278.

THURSDAY, DEC. 29	FRIDAY, DEC. 30
1:30 p.m. Registration begins	9:00 a.m. Session Three
2:00 p.m. Adult Meeting in Field House	Speakers' Tournament Speaker
2:30 p.m. Session One — Team Impact	Nolan Bishop Family Band
4:30 p.m. Dismiss for Supper	Justin & Bethany Pigott — FCA
7:00 p.m. Session Two	10:30 a.m. Break
Speakers' Tournament Speaker	11:00 a.m. Session Four
Nolan Bishop Family Band	Speakers' Tournament Speaker
Paul Barnard	Nolan Bishop Family Band
9:00 p.m. Dismiss	Mark Roberts
	12:30 p.m. Dismiss





## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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Postmaster:  
Send changes of address to: THE  
BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box 530,  
Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Send news, communication, and  
address changes to: The Editor,  
BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box 530,  
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VOLUME 135 • NUMBER 49  
(ISSN-0005-5778)

Published weekly except weeks of July 4  
and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist  
Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street,  
Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$10.35 per  
year payable in advance. Economy plans  
available for cooperating Mississippi churches.  
Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS.  
Member, Association of State Baptist Papers.  
Deadlines: News items — one calendar  
week prior to requested publication date.  
Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to  
requested publication date. All submissions  
are subject to editing.

## A symbol of our own

Symbols are powerful objects to people, and always have been. From the beginnings of human history, when people piled stones one upon the other to mark significant places and events, to the Colossus of Rhodes, to the World Trade Towers, symbols compel us to remember the past, move us to action in the present, and give us hope for a bright future.

Great movements have almost always included important symbols. Who can forget Lady Liberty in Tiananmen Square, or our own Statue of Liberty on which Lady Liberty was based? The Great Seal of the United States, with its bald eagle clutching among its talons both arrows for war and olive branches for peace, is recognized all over the world. (A trivia question: In which direction does the eagle's head face? Answer: To the right toward the olive branches, to symbolize the nation's preference for peace.)

Symbols have of course been misused through the ages, too. The swastika, for over 3,000 years the symbol of good luck in many cultures around the world, was adopted by Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party in the 1930s to capture the essence of their ruinous march toward war and mass murder. It has never recovered its original meaning.

Christians have their symbols, too, the most consequential being the cross upon which our Lord and Savior died to save each one of us. Scholars and other folks have argued for many years (and continue to do so) over the exact composition and configuration of the cross, but its influence and meaning to billions of people over the past 2,000 years is not arguable.

If Southern Baptists have a symbol to call our own, it would be the image of Lottie Moon and the ideals she embodied. One of the first Southern Baptist missionaries to be commissioned to China in 1873, her passion for helping bring lost souls to salvation in that

country is legendary even to non-Southern Baptist Christians.

Lottie lived among the Chinese people for 40 years. She was known far and wide, by both friend and foe alike, as the Heavenly Book Visitor because of her unshakable faith in and firm reliance upon the Bible. She loved the Chinese people with all her heart — especially the women and children.

She loved them so much that, when the time came, she was willing to lay down her life for them. Famine came to China, and she was so committed to the people that she gave away all her money and food so others could eat. Finally, on a ship in the harbor of Kobe, Japan, that was returning her to America, she died of malnutrition on Christmas Eve of 1912. She weighed 50 pounds.

The world little noted her life and passing, but Southern Baptists have never forgotten her. Her spiritual passion and personal sacrifice for the cause of Christ has come to symbolize our dedication to helping fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). Her selflessness epitomizes for us the image of Christ in ourselves, and calls us to be as single-minded as Lottie when it comes to the prospect of helping to bring the world to Jesus.

It is fitting that Lottie Moon has become such a powerful symbol for Southern Baptists. She dedicated her life to others and eventually died for them. How much closer to the model of Jesus could any one of us get?

As the December emphasis for this year's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions approaches the midway point and we all seek the Lord's guidance on the amount we will give, know that every penny of the offering goes directly to the field to support the Southern Baptists who are there, just as Lottie was there all those many years ago. Let us hold high the symbol of Lottie not only as we give of our resources, but as we also give of our lives to help save the world.

Most importantly, let us hold Jesus Christ highest of all. Lottie wouldn't want it any other way.



**Lottie Moon**

Most people simply do not realize the rich ancient heritage behind the Santa Claus story. The secularized and sanitized contemporary version pales in comparison with the deeply Christian ethos and content of the original.

The story goes that Nicholas was born in A.D. 280 to pious and wealthy parents who raised him in the fear and admonition of the Lord and taught him "sacred books" from the age of five. He was forced to grow up quickly upon the sudden death of his parents.

Later as a teenager, Nicholas made a pilgrimage to Egypt and Palestine. Upon returning home he felt called to ministry and was subsequently ordained. He spent time at the Monastery of Holy Zion near Myra until an old priest had a vision that he was to be the new bishop.

The congregation overwhelmingly elected him bishop, and he became known for his holiness, passion for the Gospel, and zeal. He challenged the old gods and paganism at the principal temple in his district (to the god Artemis), and it was said that the evil spirits "fled howling before him."

The old deities did not go easily. In A.D. 303, Emperor

## GUEST OPINION:

### The story of the real St. Nick

By James Parker  
Louisville, Ky.



Diocletian directed the persecution of Christians, and "as he [Nicholas] was the chief priest of the Christians of this town and preached the truths of faith with a holy liberty, Nicholas was seized by the magistrates, tortured, then chained and thrown into prison with many other Christians."

With the Edict of Milan, Emperor Constantine ordered the cessation of all persecution of the church, and the Christians were released from prisons. Those who survived Diocletian's purges were called "confessors" because they wouldn't renege on their confession of Jesus as Lord.

When Bishop Nicholas walked out of the prison, the crowds called to him: "Nicholas! Confessor!" He had been repeatedly beaten until he was raw, and his body was the color of vermilion.

One of the most interesting

stories connected with him was his role during the Arian controversy. Arius, of course, asserted that Jesus was a created being and had not existed from all eternity. St. Methodius asserted that "thanks to the teaching of St. Nicholas the metropolis of Myra alone was untouched by the filth of the Arian heresy, which it firmly rejected as death-dealing poison."

One weak tradition has him actually attending the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325, when Arian doctrine was rejected. The story goes that he got into a heated debate with Arius himself about whether there was a time when the Word (Jesus) did not exist. Nicholas strongly disagreed.

The debate ended suddenly when Nicholas punched Arius then and there on the floor of the council. The mental image of Santa Claus

punching Arius on the floor of the Council of Nicea, with Emperor Constantine looking on, fundamentally changes the way one ever sees Santa Claus again.

While I might not agree with his methods, I certainly admire his passion for Christological orthodoxy and doctrinal purity.

When you think of Santa Claus, think of a godly Christian bishop who was persecuted and imprisoned for faithfully proclaiming the faith under the most dangerous of circumstances. Think of someone who had a sensitive, caring, pastoral heart and took care of the flock of which God had made him shepherd.

Think of someone who provided support and defense for children, the weak and poor, the helpless, and victims of injustice. Think of someone with an unparalleled passion for doctrinal purity. To top it off, think of someone whose whole purpose in life was to point people to Jesus.

Now that's my kind of Santa Claus.

Parker is professor and associate dean of worldview and culture at Southern Seminary. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press.

## Viet Baptists beaten, denied medical care

HANOI, Vietnam (BP) — Three Vietnamese Baptists seriously injured in a mid-November attack were evacuated to an undisclosed hospital in Ho Chi Minh City after several hospitals in the region refused to examine and treat them.

The attack on a church leaders' worship service of an Agape Baptist Church (ABC) house church in Lai Tao village, 1,000 miles north of Ho Chi Minh City, left one woman leader, Nguyen Thi Lan, with a broken pelvis in two places and badly damaged internal organs, according to doctors who recommended emergency surgery.

Previously, however, doctors at three area hospitals had told her and two other seriously injured Christians that they were fine and dismissed them, said pastor Nguyen Cong Thanh, head of the ABC.

Nguyen Thi Lan is a recently retired Communist Party official who converted to Christianity only last year.

When doctors in Vietnam learn that religious motives play a role in violence, commonly they do not dare to treat or even examine the victims of persecution, according to Compass Direct News, which reported the incident.

ABC head Nguyen Cong Thanh had rushed north from his base in Ho Chi Minh City to help the church members. The attack took place in the home of the injured Nguyen Thi Lan, who had led some 50 extended family members, friends, and neighbors to the Christian faith since her conversion.

This angered a fellow villager identified only by his given name, Khoan. He and his son led a gang into her house and beat several people, leaving pastor Nguyen Thanh Chau unconscious and



**BEATEN, DENIED HELP** — Nguyen Thi Lan (right), a former Vietnam Communist Party member who converted to Christianity last year, is examined by an unidentified hospital staffer in a private hospital Ho Chi Minh City after she was prevented from receiving medical treatment for nearly a week following a brutal attack in her home in northern Vietnam. (Photo courtesy of Compass Direct. Used by permission)

destroying property, sources told Compass Direct.

The elder Khoan repeatedly threatened to kill Nguyen Thi Lan, and the gang of about a dozen threatened to kill Nguyen Thanh Chau if he continued gathering Christians for worship, the sources said.

ABC head Nguyen Cong Thanh said he tried to obtain medical examinations and treatment for the three most severely wounded in several government clinics and hospitals in the region, but the injured were continually told they needed no care. After nearly a week, he said the three

Christians still suffered acute pain, and they suspected serious internal injuries.

Late on Nov. 18, five days after the attack, staff members at one hospital told Nguyen Cong Thanh that there would be no examinations the next day and Sunday, and to come back on Monday, when examinations were possible.

At that point, ABC leaders decided to take the three injured church members to Ho Chi Minh City, a 1,000-mile, two-hour flight south. They reasoned that even if government hospitals would not take them, they would certainly find some doctors with a conscience in private hospitals even though such hospitals would be expensive and would require a full-payment deposit before examination and treatment.

Nguyen Thi Lan, who had not been able to eat since the attack, was admitted to a hospital immediately after her exam-

ination, as the doctors discovered her broken pelvis and severely injured organs.

Pastor Nguyen Thanh Chau, who had severe bruises on his face and head, had also been kicked in his back, chest, and stomach. Doctors diagnosed internal injuries to his kidneys, liver, and perhaps other organs. He too was admitted for further observation and treatment.

Nguyen Thi Tac, who had been hit with a steel shovel on her chest and stomach as well as her back, also remained in considerable pain but a medical examination found no serious internal injuries and she was not admitted to the hospital.

In the elder Khoan's rants during the attack, sources said, he charged that the land now legally owned by Nguyen Thi Lan had once belonged to his ancestors, implying that the current residents no longer worshipped them.

## Looking back

10 years ago

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board approves the hiring of David Alexander, church planting strategist; Paula Smith, literacy missions program, WMU; and Morris Baker, BSU director at the University of Mississippi.

20 years ago

Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., suffers the worst blow in its four-year struggle to retain accreditation when one of the seminary's two accrediting agencies places the beleaguered school on probation Dec. 5.

50 years ago

Total attendance for M Night meetings in Mississippi Dec. 4 reaches 32,514, surpassing the stated goal of 32,000.



## THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

DECEMBER 15, 2011

VOL. 135

No. 49



YOU CAN RESPOND  
RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer  
with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.



# BIBLIOPHIL

By Charles Marx, 1932 - 2004  
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GI OLV HZEV LQWF  
BZEV AQFOL AGIJVFH  
QA Z EZI'H LZIC, ZIC  
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OLV BZICXVHOGBP  
WDQI OLV DXZGHOVF  
QA OLV MZXX QA OLV  
PGIJ'H DZXZBV; ZIC  
OLV PGIJ HZM OLV  
DZFO QA OLV LZIC  
OLZO MFQOV.

CZIGVX AGKV:AGKV

Clue: B = C

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark Six: Fifty-six

## IN SEARCH OF JESUS

Just to mention the word, "search," in today's world probably brings to mind for the average computer literate person going out on Google, Bing, or some other search engine to look for some information related to some name, place, or person — but the Christmas story related by the Gospel writer Matthew tells of the Wise Men who came in search of Jesus. It is hard to totally say what these Magi, these Wise Men, were. It is hard to know exactly from whence they came. Possibly they were from somewhere from the East or even Babylon. They were students, stargazers, big picture people who were looking for things about life and its meaning. Who is God and where is He? The wonderful and amazing thing is that their search, as with any search for God, will bring a person to Jesus.

You would think that in a world that seems to be far more advanced than any civilization ever and with more info and more technology than even a generation ago, we could hardly conceive that the wise folks of today would still be looking for and coming to Jesus. It is Christmas and it is the most glorious time of the year to say it again and again. Sing it, speak it, smile it, and share it — Jesus, God's wonderful Son, has come to us. The problem is that for so many people He is still hard to find. Lost in a world that has everything, they do not know where to find Him.

A few years ago some friends of mine were getting ready for Christmas and as their tradition was, they got out this large, beautiful manger setting. The figurines they had included sheep, cattle, shepherds, Wise Men, Mary, and Joseph. It was always their family tradition that everyone got involved in the process. Their kids, mom, dad, and friends that were there were preparing the manger scene. It was an atmosphere of joy and celebration that would somewhat kick off the Christmas Season. Everyone was helping to get everything in place. They were unwrapping the animals and the supporting cast and trying to get them in their proper places. In short order, everything was done. The Christmas scene was complete except someone noticed that the baby was not in the manger. In fact, the Jesus Baby was not to be found. Scurrying through the paper that had been unwrapped and looking in the box in which it had all been placed, they could not find the Baby Jesus. He was nowhere to be found. Where was he? What had happened to him? What were they going to do? For as they rightly reasoned, it is not Christmas without the Christ Child. The mother said, "I know that he is here somewhere. We have got

to find him," but he wasn't to be found.

In the days that followed, more of the Christmas event unfolded. More boxes of lights and ornaments were brought out and displayed. A couple of days later while unloading some of the other stuff they discovered Baby Jesus wrapped up and hidden away. Thrilled that they had found him, they brought him and placed him in the manger. The word spread that Jesus had been found.

Maybe at this Christmas Season as I suppose with most Christmas Seasons, it would be good for us to pause and focus on the one thing that makes this time of the year so special and to give our full and undivided attention to Jesus. Maybe He is trying to get us to look upward and look to Him. Oftentimes, beyond what we have ever imagined, God is at work in the circumstances around us saying, "Listen up, look up to God, and He will guide you." It could be good things in your job or difficult things in your profession. It could be a new baby or the loss of a friend. Maybe there are circumstances like a blessing of a windfall profit in your work or even the struggles with your own personal debt and God is saying, "You need to look to Me!" The Wise Men figured out that there was something happening beyond their imagination, toward which God was pointing them. That led them to Jerusalem to ask the scholars of Scripture, "Where is this King supposed to be born?" Those searchers of Scripture said, "He is supposed to be born in Bethlehem." That is what the Old Testament had prophesied and they were exactly right. So the men continued their search that led them to Bethlehem, and there they found the living Lord Jesus.

At that first Christmas there was not only information but there was also misinformation or at least there were those who had misinterpretations about what was happening. Herod got in on the act and he wanted to know where that King was, as he pretended he wanted to be a part of the celebration and admiration for the new King. He had in his heart that he wanted to do away with this King so that he would not be a rival. The problem with King Herod was that he thought this King would hurt him when the truth was that He would help him. The King Jesus from heaven



## Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

did not arrive here to condemn us, to criticize us, or to cripple us. No, He came to save us, forgive us, and restore us. He loves us and He not only wants us to find Him. He is looking for us.

There are so many people in our world that have a warped view of who Jesus is and a wrong view of what He wants to do, so they run from Him rather than to Him. They say that they cannot find God but as someone correctly pointed out, a lot of people cannot find God for the same reason a thief cannot find a policeman. Maybe you have lived your life in rebellion and rejection of Jesus and have not

understood that the reason for all of this celebration is that His coming was just for you. He loves you and wants to forgive you of your sins and to give you everlasting life.

Finally, when those wise searchers came to Jesus there was a marvelous formation of a whole new way of living. There was a whole new direction of life. There was a whole new way of thinking that came about because they found Jesus. It is my prayer for every one of you that you will have a Merry, Merry Christmas and that Jesus — the real Jesus who can make a difference in your heart — will not be lost in all of the trappings and wrappings, but that you will find Him and that He will fill your life with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Coming to know Him is a new formation of life, for as the Bible says, "All things become new." A new day can begin this very day.

The author can be contacted at  
jfutral@mbcb.org.

## MS POSITIONS

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1. Elmo Church, Roxie



2. Navilla Church, McComb



3. Sunrise Church, Leake County



4. The Dills

## JUST FOR THE RECORD

1. Elmo Church, Roxie, recently ordained Aaron Walker and Jacob Hawley as deacons. Shown are Amy Walker, Walker, pastor James Hunsucker, Hawley, and Ariel Hawley.

2. The RAs and GAs of Navilla Church, McComb, collected socks and disposable razors in August to give to the Baptist Friendship House in New Orleans. Shown, front, are Jesse Fortenberry, Michelle Bruss, and Zak Shamp; center, Christopher Romack, Colton Yates, and Michael Romack; back, Mary Evelyn Fortenberry.

3. Sunrise Church, Leake County, held a GA recognition in September. Shown are the GAs and their leaders.

4. Loop Road Church, Richton, recently celebrated Pastor Appreciation Day, recognizing pastor Rory Dill and his wife Renee. Shown are the Dills.

5. First Church, Fannin, ordained Eddie Smith as deacon Nov. 27. Shown are Tony Bales, Jackie Smith, Smith, and Ron Bird.

6. First Church, Winona, recognized Aubrey Boone as life deacon Dec. 4. Boone has served as active deacon since 1959, and has served several times as deacon chairman. Shown are Gant Boone, Patsy Boone, Boone, pastor Chris Aldridge, Alan Boone, and Cindy Boone.

7. The children of Troy Church, Pontotoc County, collected food and supplies for the local food bank. Shown are the participants.

8. Poplar Springs Church, Mendenhall, ordained four new deacons Nov. 27. Shown are Chairman Buster Shows, Shane Baeuerle, Chuck Morgan, Nolan Parker, Jim Wadlington, and pastor Ted Bowlin.

9. Moselle Memorial Church, Moselle, will present their Christmas cantata Dec. 18, 6 p.m.



5. Smith ordination



6. Boone recognition



7. Troy Church, Pontotoc County



8. Poplar Springs Church, Mendenhall





1. The GAs of Calvary Church, Bogue Chitto, held a bake sale to raise money for a mission project. Shopping with the girls were their mothers and GA leaders Shirley Allen, Karen Fahner, and Pam Wallace. Hal Hatten, pastor.
2. The children and sanctuary choirs of Damascus Church, Flora, will present the cantata, Joy Has Dawned Dec. 18, 6 p.m., followed by a reception. Brenda Quattlebaum, minister of music; John Taylor, interim pastor.
3. North Carrollton Church, Carroll Association, recently ordained two new deacons in November. Shown are Charles Acey, pastor Tommy Clark, and Troy Wiltshire.
4. West Heights Church, Pontotoc, awarded 20 people perfect Sunday School attendance awards for 2010-2011. Josh Tutor received his 22nd year award. He is shown with



3. North Carrollton Church, Carroll Association

pastor David Hamilton.

5. The children's choir of Calvary

Church, Bogue Chitto, presented Down By the Creek Bank for the church family, a local nursing



4. Tutor and Hamilton

home, and another church. Directed by Danny Creel and Debbie Creel. Hal Hatten, pastor.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used. Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing. Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

### NO ON 26

Editor:

I disagree with the Editor's Notebook in the November 24 edition in which he equated those Baptists who did not support Initiative 26 as "comfortable with the death of the unborn..." I suggest that many Mississippi Baptists voted against Initiative 26 for many reasons.

The pro-life community was divided. Americans United for Life and the National Right to Life Committee did not support Initiative 26. Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum publicly opposed Personhood USA's initiatives in 2009, calling it a "hurtful gimmick," according to Christianity Today, November 11, 2011. Our governor called it "half baked" afterwards.

The medical establishment opposed Initiative 26. The Mississippi State Medical Association, the Mississippi Chapter of the American

Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the Mississippi Nurses Association, and others opposed Initiative 26.

The religious community was divided. The Catholic, Methodist, and Episcopal bishops opposed Initiative 26. Baptist pastors such as Dr. James L. Nichols of First Church Greenville opposed Initiative 26.

Finally, many Baptist couples did not trust that passage of Initiative 26 would not thrust government into their most intimate personal matters such as their choice of birth control, the conception of their children if such required medical intervention, and their right to privacy in case of miscarriage.

Many Mississippi Baptists who are pro-life did not support Initiative 26 because they concluded that it would have done nothing to reduce abortion and would likely have hurt the pro-life cause.

George S. Luter  
Jackson

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## BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE Respond to God's Gift

Matthew 2:1-15



By Burn Page

As a student of worship, I am learning that the first order in the church's mission is worship. W.T. Conner wrote, "The first business, then, of a church is not evangelism, nor mission, nor benevolence; it is worship. The worship of God in Christ should be at the very center of all that the church does. It is the mainspring of all the activity of the church (Franklin Segler: Christian Worship). Karl Barth has appropriately declared that the church's worship is the Opus Dei, the work of God, which is carried out for its own sake. That is, worship is an end in itself; it is not a means to something else. We should worship Christ for who he is, not for what we can get. True worship is responding to God's initiative in giving us his Son through whom we have been redeemed

(set free) from sin and death. Christians respond by offering back to God their praise, thanksgiving, and gifts.

This gospel story delineates between true worship and false worship — the true worship of the Magi and the false worship of Herod. It is a story of acceptance and rejection. Matthew tells us that magi (plural), astrologers or "wise men," came from the east. Most likely they were Gentiles from the region of ancient Babylon or modern day Iraq. In Matthew's mind, Gentiles who were considered alien to God's purposes exhibit an openness to God's purposes and express an eager receptivity toward the newborn king. The text does not say there were three men; it does name three gifts — gold, incense, and myrrh.

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Jesus was born "in the days of Herod the King, and magi from the east came to Jerusalem asking, 'Where is the one born king of the Jews?'" The only other occurrences of the title "King of the Jews," in Matthew are in the passion narrative, where it is used in mockery of Jesus and always in the mouths of Gentiles (27:11, 29, 37). We know from secular records that Herod died in 4 B.C. so Jesus would have to have been born earlier (4-5 B.C.) This confusion in dating the birth of Christ comes from the 6th century scholar, Dionysius Exiguus who designed the Christian calendar (B.C./A.D. — Anno Domini — "in the year of our Lord") and miscalculated the time of Christ's birth (by 4-5 years).

When Herod heard of the Magi's search for the "one born king of the Jews," he was not thrilled but "troubled" or "disturbed" and all Jerusalem with him. The people knew how determined the powerful and

paranoid Herod would be to eliminate any threat to his sovereign rule, even from his own family. Herod had his favorite wife, Mariamne, his mother-in-law, and three sons strangled, drowned or killed in some way when he suspected them of treason. In his mind, he was the only king in town and, therefore, Herod immediately sought to discover where "the Christ (not king) was to be born" under the guise of wanting to worship him.

However, true to his character, Herod became "exceedingly furious" and gave orders to kill all the boy babies two years old and under in Bethlehem and the surrounding area. This gruesome slaughter reflected a previous time in Israel's history when Pharaoh also engaged in the indiscriminate killing of children in order (also unsuccessfully) to eliminate a newborn (Moses) who represented a threat to his control of the Israelites.

The "take away" from this lesson is that the presence of the messianic king demands a decision and therefore causes divi-

sion between those who accept and those who reject him. Notice the glaring contrasts: The magi search for the "one born king of the Jews" in order to worship him; Herod searches in order to kill him. When the magi found the baby they were overjoyed, literally "they rejoiced with a great joy exceedingly"; when Herod heard of the baby he was "disturbed." The true worship of the Magi reflected a giving spirit; the false worship of Herod reflected a selfish, murderous spirit.

Each one of us needs to ask, "Does my worship reflect that of the Magi or that of Herod?" The world has many contenders ("kings" or "gods") calling for our worship. But one day, there will be a worship service where every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (the King). May we be about enacting that service of true worship this Christmas season!

Page is chair of the Department of Christian Studies and Philosophy at Mississippi College and a member of First Church, Clinton.

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE Stay Fearless in Your Obedience

Numbers 13:26-28, 31: 14:6-9, 17-23

By Melleen Moore

How many times have we refused an opportunity out of fear of failure? God has gifted each of us to serve; however, it is easy to allow second thoughts or inadequacies to get in our way of being all we can be for God. Being obedient often calls us to be bold and fearless before God, willing to risk so we can grow spiritually and lead others.

What's Keeping You from Obedying?

Numbers 13: 26-28, 31

Near but far! The Israelites were so near the promised land, as Kadesh is located close to the Southern border of Canaan. However, they were far away in accepting the Promised Land from God. The 12 spies, one from each tribe, had just returned from a 40 day

journey in Canaan. Entering on the southern tip and going north to the mountains and returning to Moses, Aaron and the congregation of Israelites were charged with observing the land, its people and the cities. They returned carrying grapes on a pole, pomegranates and fig, reporting that the land "truly flows with milk and honey" (Numbers 13: 27, NKJV). Using the same descriptive words that God promised Moses from the burning bush, that He told the Children of Israel as they left Egypt and repeated after the episode of the golden calf, God still promised the Israelites the land flowing with milk and honey. The abnormally large people known as "giants," and the well fortified cities, struck fear in the hearts of ten of the



Moore

What's Good About Obedying?

Numbers 14:6-9

Showing extreme grief and sorrow, Joshua and Caleb tore their clothes over the disobediences to God. They continued to speak boldly of the "exceedingly good land" (Numbers 14: 7, NKJV). Having seen all that was in the land just as the other spies did, they believed the land was theirs for the taking. They even warned others not to rebel against God stating, "the Lord is with us. Do not fear them" — (the people of Canaan) (Numbers 14:9, NKJV). After all, God had

sent the spies into the land to build their confidence and faith, not to judge if possessing the land could be done. The Israelites had so quickly forgotten all that God had done for them — leading by cloud and fire, protecting from dangers, and feeding them from heaven. Joshua and Caleb were unsuccessful in convincing the Israelites that God would go before them if only they would put their faith in Him. Receiving God's promises is a blessing of obedience. How obedient are we?

How Does God Handle Disobedience

Numbers 14: 12-23

The Lord speaks of His anger with the Children of Israel for being disobedient and declares judgment. Moses pleads with the Lord to show his power and forgive them. He reminds God that He has forgiven them before because of His patience and His loving mercy. God answered Moses' prayer to pardon; however, God issued consequences for their disobedience. Those who

had seen the Lord's glory, the signs in Egypt and the wilderness, and tested the Lord these ten times (Numbers 14:22) would not see the Promised Land. The Life Application Study Bible: New Living Translation identifies these ten times as: lack of trust at the Red Sea (Ex. 14: 11-12); complaints of bitter water (Ex. 15:24); griping in the desert to go back to Egypt (Ex. 16:3); taking more daily manna than needed (Ex. 16:20); taking manna on the Sabbath (Ex. 16:27-29); desire for more water at Rephidim (Ex. 17:2); worshipping the golden calf (Ex. 32:7-10); complaints at Taberah (Num. 11:1-2); lack of desired food (Num. 11: 4) and decision not to enter the Promised Land (Num. 14: 1-4). God rewarded Joshua's and Caleb's faithfulness as they were part of the possessing of the Promised Land. How many times does God want to bless us, yet we are disobedient and miss the blessing?

Moore is a member of Macedonia Church, Petal.

## Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if

submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lit. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

THE BAPTIST  
Record



# 'Dolly's daddy': time to shutter embryonic stem cell research

LA JOLLA, Calif. (BP) — The scientist who led the team that cloned Dolly the sheep has urged fellow researchers to forego embryonic stem cell research, which he says is fraught with practical problems, and pursue more promising types of research.

That's because he believes other research likely will overtake embryonic stem cell research.

Ian Wilmut spoke to a crowd of stem cell researchers on Nov. 29 in La Jolla, Ca., telling them that because embryonic stem cells tend to lead to tumors, scientists should spend their time on non-embryonic forms of research, particularly on a new method called direct reprogramming.

In direct reprogramming, scientists avoid stem cells altogether and, for instance, reprogram a skin cell directly into a nerve cell. Researchers have had success doing just that with lab mice. It has the support of ethicists who have opposed embryonic research.

"I'm not quite sure why this hasn't been pursued more actively," said Wilmut, who led the team that cloned Dolly the sheep in the 1990s.

Wilmut's speech was reported by the North County Times (Escondido, Ca.), which paraphrased him as saying direct reprogramming would provide the benefits of embryonic stem cell research without the risks. The

government, he added, likely won't spend money on embryonic research if a safer method is available.

If successful, direct reprogramming would turn the political and ethical debate upside down, making moot discussions over which types of stem cells are most promising. Wilmut was speaking in the same state where voters in 2004 approved a 10-year, three-billion-dollar investment in embryonic stem cell research. No cures have yet come out of that investment.

With embryonic stem cell research, scientists try to take stem cells from embryos and turn them into specific cells for the body. The process is opposed by pro-lifers because it destroys the embryo. For instance, in direct programming scientists could theoretically take a skin cell and simply reprogram it into a nerve cell without involving either embryos or stem cells of any kind.

In the results of one mice lab experiment released in 2010, fibroblast cells found in connective tissue were reprogrammed into nerve cells.

David Prentice, senior fellow for life sciences at the Family Research Council, called direct programming a "booming area where you might say they cut out the middle man." Even induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cells, long championed by pro-lifers, can cause tumors, Prentice said.



Dolly and Ian Wilmut

In iPS research, scientists change an adult stem into embryo-like stem cells.

"iPS cells are ethically OK, but because they act like an embryonic stem cell, frankly are still not safe," Prentice said. "Wilmut is saying there is an even better way that gets around the ethical problems but also bypasses much of the safety issues."

Significantly, Wilmut wasn't making his argument on ethical grounds but mere feasibility. "This is Dolly's daddy, the guy who cloned Dolly the sheep,"

Prentice said. "He's turned away from cloning, he's turned away from embryonic stem cells, and he's pointing towards reprogrammed cells."

Upon learning of the 2010 lab mice experiment, ethicist Wesley J. Smith called it a "holy cow" moment. Much work remains to be done, he wrote before adding: "Good ethics do produce good science."

It has not been a great year for supporters of embryonic stem cell research, which took a big hit in mid-November when Geron, the company that launched the nation's first government-approved embryonic stem cell trial, announced it was halting the trial and shifting its funding into cancer research.

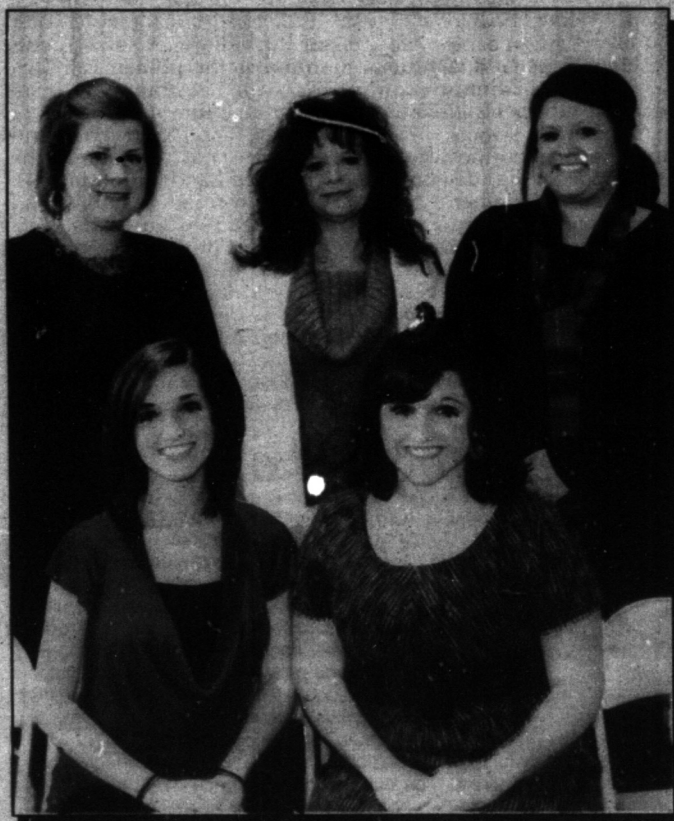
Funding for embryonic research, the company said, was scarce. Pro-lifers said the lack of funding showed that the promise of embryonic research was false.

Research using adult stem cells, meanwhile, has produced 73 medical treatments, according to a tally by the Coalition of Americans for Research Ethics. Nearly all of the high-profile stem cell treatments involving well-known patients have involved adult stem cells.

If successful, direct programming likely would far surpass the achievements of adult stem cells.

## COLLEGE NEWS

1. William Carey University's Alpha Chi National College Honor Society inducted 66 new members into its chapter on November 30. The inductees from Jefferson Davis County and Marion County are (left to right, front row) Haley Bryant of Bassfield, Courtney Daley of Carson, (left to right, back row) Amy Lowery of Columbia, Jennifer Carney of Columbia, and Lindsay Stogner of Sandy Hook.



1. Carey National College Honor Society

## JUST FOR THE RECORD

1. First Church, Terry, sent a mission team of 29 students and adults on a mission trip to New York City in July to do personal evangelism, worship leading, and service ministries in all five boroughs of the city.
2. The children's choir of Goodwater Church, Enterprise, presented Aaron the Allergic Shepherd Dec. 4. Shown are the participants.
3. Shelton Church, Moselle, ordained Derek Sumrall as deacon Oct. 23. Shown are pastor Charles Brady with Sumrall, his wife Anna and daughter Micah.
4. Neshoba Church, Union, held a baby dedication. Shown are Lee, Jill, Sydnee, and Peyton Killen and pastor Johnny Collins.



2. Goodwater Church, Enterprise



3. Sumrall ordination



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